

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM CONFERENCE CALL

November 1, 2006 Meeting

FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES ON FUTURE ACTIONS

Facilitator: Robin Harkless

Notes: Erin Halton

The following notes are a summary of issues that are intended to point out future actions or issues that may need further discussion at upcoming meetings. These notes are not intended to be the "record" of the meeting, only a reminder for TMT members.

Dworshak Selector Gate – Over/Under Shot Mode

Jim Adams, COE, presented on Dworshak operations: the temperatures at depths of 9' to 20' were in the range of 54-55 degrees, and depths of 20' to 25' would bring temperatures down to 51.5 degrees. Adams also noted the planned outage on 11/13, and testing of unit 3 on 11/14, which will draft the reservoir, last for 6-8 hours and likely drop temperatures 10 degrees. Howard Burge, USFWS, said that from a hatchery perspective, waiting to switch the project into overshot mode until further cooling in the reservoir (~52 degrees) occurs would be preferred. Adams suggested waiting to position the gates at Dworshak for either over/undershot mode until after the 11/13-14 special operations.

Action/Next Steps: Jim Adams, COE, and Howard Burge, USFWS, will connect via phone on Friday, 11/10, with a potential follow-up call on Monday, 11/13, to check status of the temperatures in the reservoir and make a decision about whether to operate Dworshak at under or overshot mode. The COE will issue a teletype.

Update: Chum Status

Russ Kiefer, ID, reported that spawn surveys to-date had sighted 12-15 live Fall Chinook, 5 Fall Chinook redds, 30-35 Coho, but no chum. Another spawning survey was planned for 11/2.

SOR #2006-7

Russ Kiefer, IDFG, and Ron Boyce, ODFW, presented the salmon managers' request for an 11.5' tailwater elevation at Bonneville, with a start date of 11/3. Cathy Hlebechuk noted that there is a timing conflict: scheduled installation of sea lion exclusion device (SLAD) brackets, which will require a tailrace elevation of 10' or less on 11/6. TMT members weighed in on how to proceed with respect to the SOR and the need for the scheduled installation:

OR: Implement the SOR as soon as possible on 11/3, see if there is a way to complete the installation by 11/3, and see what the results from the spawning survey on 11/2 are.

BOR: Wait for results from the spawning survey, and the installation of the exclusion devices, and then implement the SOR.

WA: Wait until survey and installation are completed to begin the chum operation.

ID: Okay with implementing the SOR as soon as installation is completed, with a caveat of delaying the installation if the 11/2 surveys sighted chum.

BPA: Interested in setting up the system to provide a good chum operation, particularly when the

bulk of the chum are spawning. Depending on flow conditions and results from the 11/2 survey, implement the SOR after the exclusion device is installed.

COE: Offered to check on whether the installation work could be scheduled or completed sooner than 11/6. Cathy Hlebechuk suggested TMT have a conference call on the morning of 11/3 to share information about the results of the 11/2 chum survey, possible change to SLAD bracket installation work, and when BPA thinks they can set up the river to do the chum operation.

NOAA: *(no NOAA representative was present on the call)*

Action/Next Steps: TMT members agreed to have a conference call at 9 a.m. on 11/3, to hear an update on the SLAD installation schedule, the 11/2 chum survey, and the prognosis for setting up the river to implement the chum operation.

Technical Management Team Conference Call Notes

November 1, 2006

1. Greetings and Introductions.

The November 1 TMT conference call was chaired by Cathy Hlebechuk and facilitated by Robin Harkless. The following is a summary (not a verbatim transcript) of the topics discussed and decisions made at this meeting. Anyone with questions or comments about these notes should contact Hlebechuk at 503-808-3942.

2. Chum Status.

To date, the spawning ground survey personnel have seen 15 live fall chinook, about 25 coho and no chum on the spawning grounds at Ives Island, said Russ Kiefer, with 5 fall chinook redds. A total of 14 chum have been counted over Bonneville to date, and one chum over The Dalles, said Cindy LeFleur. Chum have been seen in the Grays River system since October 17, LeFleur added. First chum observation and spawning is pretty much like clockwork around November 3-4-5 every year, noted Ron Boyce. That would mean that they should start to show up this weekend, he added.

3. Dworshak Selector Gate Operation – Over- or Undershot Mode?

Jim Adams said the Corps is still trying to decide when to shift the Dworshak selector gates into overshot mode. The highest temperature in the reservoir is 55 degrees, down to about 20 meters in depth. My guess is that if we go to overshot mode now, we would end up with a discharge temperature of 54-55 degrees, Adams said. We are still planning to do the full outage at Dworshak for 12 hours beginning at 7 am on November 13, he added – during that time, we will be releasing only 1 Kcfs through the ROs at about 4 degrees C, or 39 degrees F.

The question is, when do we want to go to overshoot mode at Dworshak? Adams said – there's no real urgency to the decision, but this is the time of year we normally do that. One other piece of information – on November 14, we will need to test unit 3, and run it at full load – 5.1 Kcfs – for 6-8 hours.

Howard Burge said 54-55 degrees F is not a great temperature for rearing fish – the hatchery would prefer that undershot mode operation continue for the time being, to provide cooler water for the hatchery. We can leave this decision until after the shutdown and test are concluded on November 14, Adams replied. We would hate to see you switch to overshoot mode before then, given the fact that you'll be releasing 39-degree water for 12 hours, said Burge – higher temperatures now will make that shock even more severe. After a brief discussion, no TMT objections were raised to continuing undershot mode operation at Dworshak until after the shutdown and test are concluded. Adams said he will discuss this operation with Burge on November 10 and November 13 (if needed), at which time a decision will be made as to whether to operate in undershot or overshoot mode during the unit test.

4. 2006 Chum SOR – Bonneville Tailwater Elevations.

At today's meeting, the salmon managers presented SOR 2006-7, covering Bonneville tailwater elevations to protect chum spawning in 2006-07. We are sensitive to the timing of this operation, Kiefer said, but are cognizant that the chum almost always show up in the first week of November and begin to establish redds almost immediately. The SOR requests the following specific operations:

- Provide a minimum instantaneous tailwater elevation of 11.5 feet at Bonneville Dam when chum are present (as required by the 2004 FCRPS Biological Opinion) but not later than November 3, 2006, and continue until further notice. On average, it is anticipated that daily average flow for this operation will not exceed 125 Kcfs. The request is similar to what has been requested the last several years.

One complication is that project personnel are installing brackets for the Sea Lion Acoustic Deterrents (SLADS), which means that, this Monday, they will need a tailwater elevation of 10 feet or less for about four hours, Hlebechuk said. Boyce asked whether the Corps could have divers install the brackets at a later date this winter. Hlebechuk said she would look into the possibility of rescheduling the work. Tuesday would be a perfect day for Bonneville to start the chum operation, added Robin MacKay. Why couldn't the brackets have been installed this summer or fall? Boyce asked. I first heard about this earlier this week, Hlebechuk replied – you would have to talk to the project manager about the timing. I know there were some problems with the manufacturing process, she added.

I think we're right in the biological ballpark if we start the operation on November

7, MacKay said – there are areas where the fish can spawn around the fringes. Would it be a problem to start the operation on November 3, go down to a 10-foot elevation for four hours on Monday, then back up to 11.5 feet? LeFleur asked. That would not be Bonneville's preference, MacKay said – we would prefer to conserve water over the weekend. Kiefer said he would not advocate raising flows, then dropping them, then raising them again, even if the drop is for four hours only. If we have to do the work, in my recommendation, as a biologist, would be to wait until after the bracket work is completed before setting up conditions for chum, Kiefer said. Boyce disagreed, saying he would prefer to move forward with the chum operation as recommended.

After a few minutes of discussion, MacKay noted that Bonneville is concerned that this may be shaping up to be an El Niño water year, and it would be their preference to hold as much water in Grand Coulee until chum are known to be present. Hlebechuk reiterated that the BiOp says the operation will begin once the chum are present, and they are not present yet. Tony Norris said Reclamation's perspective is that it would be more prudent to begin the chum operation next Tuesday, once chum are known to be present.

Harkless asked whether it would be possible to begin the chum operation on Monday, rather than Tuesday, as soon as the bracket installation work is done – currently, that work is scheduled to be finished at 11:30 am on Monday. That would be possible, Hlebechuk said, assuming that no problems are encountered. Hlebechuk apologized to the other TMT members for the short notice on the bracket installation work.

There was general agreement that, rather than waiting until Tuesday, it would be preferable to begin the chum operation on Monday, November 6, as soon as the bracket installation work is completed. Boyce reiterated that Oregon would prefer to begin the chum operation as scheduled on Friday, November 3. In response to a question from Boyce about delaying the bracket installation work, Hlebechuk said she could see if the Corps could get a contract in place for divers to do the bracket installation underwater at a later date.

Kiefer said IDFG's recommendation would be to set the requested operation up on Friday; if chum are seen on the Ives Island spawning grounds during tomorrow's survey, then the chum operation would begin on November 3. The Corps could then take the necessary time to get a dive contract in place so that the bracket installation could be completed underwater at some point between now and next spring. In response to a question, Boyce said Oregon recommends implementation of the SOR operation on November 3 no matter what the results of tomorrow's spawning ground survey. MacKay said Bonneville's preference would be to begin the chum operation once the bracket installation work is completed on Monday. Hlebechuk said the Corps is very concerned about starting the operation before chum are present and would like to gather information before making a decision on a start date.

Ultimately, it was agreed that the TMT will re-convene via conference call Friday morning whether or not chum are observed on the Ives Island spawning grounds during tomorrow's survey. It was agreed that Hlebechuk will check on the feasibility of postponing Monday's bracket installation until later in the season, when it can be accomplished underwater by divers and Mackay will check to see when the river could be set up to start the chum operation.

5. Next TMT Meeting Date.

A TMT conference call was scheduled for Friday, November 3 at 9 am. The next face-to-face meeting of the Technical Management Team was set for Wednesday, November 8. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.

TMT Participant List
November 1, 2006

Name	Affiliation
Cathy Hlebechuk	COE
Kyle Dittmer	CRITFC
Tony Norris	USBR
Russ Kiefer	IDFG
Robin MacKay	BPA
Howard Burge	USFWS
Cindy LeFleur	WDFW
Ron Boyce	ODFW
Margaret Finalrdo	FPC
Robin Harkless	Facilitation Team
Jim Gaspard	BC Hydro
Tom Le	PSE
Shane Scott	NWRP
Hanna Miles	SnoPUD
Tim Heizenrater	Cascade Energy
Ruth Burris	PGE
Jim Adams	COE